



Focus Schools 2013-14: An Overview

Presented by:
Michigan Department of Education

Focus Schools 2013/14

- What is a Focus School?
- How was our school identified as a Focus School?
- How can I review the data regarding this designation?
- What does this mean for our school?
- What supports will be provided to assist with this effort?
- What are the next steps?

What is a Focus School?

- Focus Schools are identified as the ten percent (10%) of Michigan schools having the widest gap in student achievement between their lowest and highest performing students

How was our school identified as a Focus School?

- The Top to Bottom Ranking uses three metrics:
 - ✓ Achievement
 - ✓ Improvement in Achievement
 - ✓ ***Gaps in Achievement***
- For more detail about the metric used to identify Focus Schools, please visit:
 - ***<http://mi.gov/focusschools>***

Where can we see our data?

- The 2012/13 Top-to-Bottom Individual School Lookup Tool that shows all three components of a Focus School's profile can be found upon public release (August 2013) at <http://mi.gov/ttb>
- An embargoed preview of each Focus school's lookup page was emailed to district Superintendents in July
- More information on Focus Schools can be found at: www.michigan.gov/focusschools

All Focus Schools

- Focus Schools are in a four-year cohort beginning with their first year of identification (2013 cohort this year)
- This designation will appear on the school's Scorecard. If a 2013 cohort school is no longer identified in 2017-18, the school is no longer listed as a Focus School and leaves its cohort.
- Any year between now and 2017-18 in which a school is not identified as a Focus School, the requirements and supports are conditionally suspended.
- If a school is not identified and then re-identified between now and 2017-18, the requirements and supports match its cohort year.

What do we do now?

1. Participate in the **Superintendent's Dropout Challenge**: Identify 10 – 15 students who are at risk due to:
 - Attendance
 - Behavior Problems
 - Course/Class Proficiency

What supports are available?

Superintendent's Dropout Challenge resources:

- MDE website:

www.michigan.gov/dropoutchallenge

- IES Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention



What do we do now?

2. All districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

- Conduct Data Dialogues with their Focus Schools to identify teaching and learning priorities that are likely to close the achievement gap
- Ensure that the school post the identified teaching and learning priorities in ASSIST by November 25th and includes these in the spring revision of the SIP

What supports are available?

- Student Data Reports are available with a secure log-in at MI School Data:
<https://www.mischooldata.org>
- A protocol for Data Driven Dialogues by Bruce Wellman and Laura Lipton:
http://www.miravia.com/pdf/DDD_study_guide_final.pdf
- Focus School Diagnostic in ASSIST for posting the Teaching and Learning Priorities
<http://advanc-ed.org/mde> - Online Resources and Tools – Guide to Completing and Submitting Priority and Focus Requirements

What do we do now?

3. All districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

- Participate in district-level Data Dialogues on systems-level changes needed to support the rapid change needed in Focus Schools
- Implement necessary actions to facilitate change in support to Focus Schools
- Revise the District Improvement Plans to reflect these system improvements

What supports are available?

- There is a self-assessment of district systems available at the Education Resource Strategies (ERS) website:
http://www.erstrategies.org/assessments/resource_check
- Suggestions for district actions and resources aligned to the ERS Self-Assessment can be found at: <http://mitoolkit.org>
- There are resources for district improving planning and navigating the ASSIST website at: <http://advanc-ed.org/mde> - Guide to Completing and Submitting the DIP and DIP Flowchart

What do we do now?

4. All Districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

- Monitor and evaluate the Focus School's School Improvement Plan to ensure that teaching and learning priorities to close the gap are included
- Report to the School Board quarterly on the progress in the Focus Schools

What supports are available?

- Michigan's Continuous School Improvement (MI CSI) work group has posted online training for the school improvement process: <http://advanc-ed.org/mde> Training – School Improvement Training Powerpoints – DO: Implement, Monitor and Evaluate this Plan
- MDE Evaluation Tool: http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/Program_evaluation_Writing_SampleF_415104_7.pdf?20130702171027

Title I Additional Requirements

5. Notify parents in the Focus School's attendance area of this identification by August 23. This is described in another presentation
6. There are Title I set-aside requirements that begin in the second year of identification for Title I schools and in the third year of identification for Title I districts. These are described in another presentation

Title I Additional Support

- All Title I District with Focus Schools will be assigned a District Improvement Facilitator who will work with central office staff for approximately 40 hours during the school year to provide assistance in completing the requirements.

Next Steps

- Develop a plan to address internal and community communications regarding the Focus school designation
- If your school is a Title I school, determine who from central office will be working with the MSU-assigned District Improvement Facilitator
- Begin to implement the requirements as outlined here

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